

Message Text

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43

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SS-14 NSC-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-09

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-12 PRS-01 PM-09 EB-11 AID-20

COME-00 TRSE-00 RSR-01 /109 W

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R 171430 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1015

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR 104

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USCINCS FOR POLAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGGUA 1648

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV NU

SUBJECT: COURTESY CALL ON GENERAL SOMOZA BY GENERAL WM. ROSSON,
CINCSO

1. ON MARCH 14 GENERAL WILLIAM ROSSO, COMMANDER OF THE US SOUTHERN COMMAND, VISITED MANAGUA AND PAID A COURTESY CALL ON GENERAL SOMOZA ACCOMPANIED BY THE AMBASSADOR AND COLONEL MURPHY, U S MILGRP COMMANDER. DURING THE COURSE OF THE CONVERSATION GENERAL SOMOZA OUTLINED SOME OF HIS VIEWS ON THE FUTURE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS OF NICARAGUA. GENERAL SOMOZA SAID THAT AS A RESULT OF THE EARTHQUAKE IT WAS CLEAR TO HIM THAT THERE WOULD BE A VERY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE OF THE COUNTRY. HE CHARACTERIZED THIS DEVELOPMENT AS HE FORESAW IT ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS AS A " REVOLUTION". HE STATED THAT THE " REVOLUTION" WOULD BE ENTIRELY PEACEFUL AND THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO LEAD SUCH A TRANSFORMATION IN NICARAGUAN LIFE. SOMOZA SAID THAT IT WAS CLEAR TO HIM THAT MANY OF THE PATTERNS THAT EXISTED PRIOR TO THE EARTHQUAKE WOULD NIEVER BE REESTABLISHED-- THAT THE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAD BEEN SMALL ENTREPRENEURS MORE OR LESS TIED TO A WEALTHY CLASS WHICH OWNED THE BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES OF DOWNTOWN MANAGUA, WERE NOW FINDING THEMSELVES ABLE WITH THE
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ASSISTANCE OF SMALL LOANS AND MORE FLEXIBLE AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY
TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN SMALL BUSINESSES ON A MORE INDEPENDENT

BASIS AND THAT THIS WOULD INEVITABLY CREATE A MUCH LARGER AND MORE IMPORTANT MIDDLE CLASS WITHOUT TIES TO THE WEALTHY CLASSES AND THAT THIS NEW MIDDLE CLASS WOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO RISE RATHER RAPIDLY IN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE OF NICARAGUA. SOMOZA ALSO POINTED OUT THAT A GREAT DEAL OF THE INHERITED WEALTH OF THE COUNTRY WAS IN THE OWNERSHIP OF THE CENTRAL CITY OF MANAMA WHICH HAD BEEN BADLY DESTROYED AND THAT THIS WOULD TEND TO REDUCE THEIR SENSE OF AUTHORITY AND POWER OVER THOSE LESS ECONOMICALLY FORTUNATE. THE HIGH PRICE OF COTTON, COFFEE, BEEF, AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL ITEMS, WERE TENDING TO MAKE THE RURAL AREAS OF NICARAGUA MORE IMPORTANT ECONOMICALLY AND TO BRING MORE INCOME ON A MORE WIDELY DISBURSED BASIS TO THE RURAL POPULATION, WHICH WOULD TEND IN AND OF ITSELF TO SHIFT THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF THE COUNTRY. SOMOZA EMPHASIZED THAT HE FELT THAT THIS WAS A VERY HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT FOR NICARAGUA AND THAT HE BELIEVED THAT THE INCREASED PROSPERITY OF THE MIDDLE CLASS AND AN ENLARGEMENT OF THIS CLASS WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO A HEALTHIER DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY AND THAT HE (SOMOZA) WAS PREPARED TO ENCOURAGE IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE SUCH FORWARD DEVELOPMENT.

2. SOMOZA REITERATED THAT HE WELCOMED THIS "REVOLUTIONARY" CHANGE AND FELT THAT IT WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO A MORE DESIRABLE FUTURE SITUATION IN NICARAGUA.
SHELTON

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